



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

KENYA AND EAST AFRICA

Mitigating Conflict



A young girl signs a peace pledge on a banner that reads, "Understanding the Constitution is the Key to a Peaceful Kenya"

USAID/Kenya Contacts:

Karen Freeman
Mission Director
Tel: + 254 (0) 20 862 2000
Email: kfreeman@usaid.gov

John Smith-Sreen
Chief, Democracy, Conflict and Governance
Email: jsmith-sreen@usaid.gov

Key Activity Areas:

- Youth Development.
- Women's participation in peace building and community cohesion
- Education of marginalized and/or vulnerable children.
- Reduction of conflict over natural resources and livestock.
- Development and strengthening of early-warning and conflict-prevention mechanisms.

Achievement Snapshots:

- FY 2014, more than 2.8 million Kenyans participated in USAID events geared toward mitigating conflict and over 10,000 new groups or initiatives were created dedicated to resolving the conflict or the drivers of the conflict in Kenya.
- 774 Somali women participated in a substantive role in a peace building process.
- USAID supported the regional Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism to upgrade its early warning early response reporter system to accommodate data collection and reporting through mobile platforms, including capability to take new conflict indicators and incorporate Global Information System and structural data into the system.

OVERVIEW

Conflict and economic threats make East Africa one of the most unstable regions in the world. Peace in Somalia remains fragile; al Shabaab remains active and deadly, and is a threat to the entire region. In Kenya, ethno-political tensions, marginalization of ethnic minorities, competition over or access to livelihood resources are some of the causes of conflict. Economic progress is frequently reversed for many families through the loss of economic assets, such as livestock, business assets, homes, and other personal property. Other factors also increase the region's vulnerability to conflict and instability, including a large, mostly unemployed youth population.

To address the causes of conflict and to provide non-violent alternatives, USAID activities strengthen community cohesion and increase women's participation in civic and economic life. Other activities across the region address underlying grievances, such as disputes over land or grazing rights, lack of economic opportunity, and feelings of disenfranchisement among young and marginalized populations. USAID investments also improve access to education for children in conflict areas.

PROGRAM AREAS

Youth Development

East African youth suffers from rampant unemployment and are frequently disenfranchised from the mainstream society and economy, making them especially vulnerable to political manipulation, drug addiction, and recruitment by radical extremists. Youth-development efforts to mitigate conflict focus on including young people in peace building and reconciliation processes, improving access to essential services, strengthening and increasing young people's participation in civic and political affairs, and improving livelihood opportunities.

In FY 2014, more than 3.3 million Kenyan youth were reached via public-information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflict and to promote Kenya's development. Youths have been active in mediating disputes around land and natural resource management, organizing sports events with local government officials, and creating awareness of the importance of working together to solve community problems. Working with the National Registration Board, Yes Youth Can helped more than 50,000 youths acquire national identity cards, while the Ministry for Industrialization and Enterprise Development helped young people to form, register, launch, and mentor youth saving and credit cooperative organizations.

In FY 2014, USAID assistance to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) supported Uganda's Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit to establish Peace Clubs in six secondary schools in the Karamoja region with 240 youths.

These clubs provide training for young people in conflict prevention and peace building. CEWARN supported the Kenyan Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit to boost youth incomes by providing seed capital for micro-enterprise in the conflict-affected counties of Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Wajir, and West Pokot in collaboration with the National Drought Management Authority. The program deters youths from engaging in criminal activities, such as cattle rustling and banditry, and has enhanced school enrollment and retention by extending boarding facilities and constructing underground water tanks for schools.

Natural Resource and Livestock Management

Conflicts over scarce natural resources among pastoral communities in the Horn of Africa have caused heavy losses of livestock and human life and are partly to blame for the slow rate of development in these areas. Natural resource-based and human-wildlife conflicts also present major challenges for conservation. In Kenya, USAID has supported the Northern Rangelands Trust since 2004, investing \$7 million dollars in its work to improve livestock and water management, facilitate private investment and ecotourism, improve lives and livelihoods for pastoralist communities through income diversification and conflict resolution between groups, and reduce human/wildlife conflict. The intelligence work of more than 600 trained and armed community rangers linked to the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Kenya Police Service has significantly contributed to reduced banditry, cattle rustling and conflict in conservancy areas, restoring peace to violence-prone areas.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development CEWARN also has reduced conflict and livestock banditry along border areas. For example, in April 2014, an alert given to local administration in Nakapiripirit, Uganda, of an impending raid from Pokot on the Pian community, prompted deployment of Ugandan police along the raiding cross-border area, forcing the raiders to abandon their mission. Passing information from the CEWARN mechanism to the Uganda police and security forces helped them work together and partner with the local communities to prevent conflict.

Women, Peace & Security

Increasing opportunities for women to exercise leadership in the peace building arena is a priority for USAID. USAID/Somalia supports Somali women as they increasingly claim leadership roles, participate in decision-making, organize peace processes, and actively work on conflict prevention. Activities include programming focused on increasing women's roles in community decision-making, women's economic empowerment, and increasing women's participation in peace building processes. In Mogadishu's Warta Nabadda District, USAID activities rehabilitated a community center, providing space for women to participate in community discussions on peace and security. In September 2014, 40 women from five districts of Mogadishu met with the Warta Nabadda District Commissioner at the center to address key security challenges that women face in Mogadishu.

The USAID Peace Initiative Kenya activity works in several hotspot areas, including Kenya's Coast, in the Rift Valley, and in key counties around the city of Kisumu. Peace Initiative Kenya creates linkages between peace building and reconciliation efforts, initiatives to combat gender-based violence, and women's leadership. It has conducted hundreds of trainings on peace and reconciliation and reached thousands of people through its radio programming.

USAID partners with Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) to support the development of women's leadership in peace building. In 2014, USAID sponsored eight women with community peace-building experience and leadership potential to participate in the EMU Graduate Conflict Transformation program to increase their influence and expand their networks in peace building. Graduates of the program report they are playing key roles in peace and security activities in their communities and have been promoted to leadership roles. For example, one graduate took an important position with the Puntland (Somalia) Development Research Centre researching devolution issues and another became the Land Rights Lawyer with the County Government of Wajir, Kenya.

Education

The USAID approach to education programming is based on the belief that education is both foundational to human development and critical to broad-based economic growth, democratic governance, and peace and security. To that end, USAID implements programs across the region to enhance equitable primary-school access for children in conflict-affected areas. USAID interventions address both management issues and cultural factors that affect students and teachers and impede learning in conflict areas.